

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 AID-05 /084 W
-----061532Z 048975 /40

P R 061311Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4131
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TRIPOLI 0294

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, LY
SUBJ: PEOPLES POWER - SOME OBSERVATIONS

REF: TRIPOLI 0293

1. LIBYAN LEADER MUAMMAR QAHAFI BROUGHT TO A CLIMAX HIS
LONG CAMPAIGN TO LEGITIMIZE THE AUTHORITY OF HIS REVOLU-
TIONARY GOVERNMENT BY PROCLAIMING "A NEW AND UNIQUE
STRUCTURE FOR THE LIBYAN POLITICAL SCENE." SEBHA, THE
SITE OF THE GENERAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS, WAS CHOSEN FOR
ITS HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE. IT WAS IN SEBHA THAT QADHAFI,
AS A YOUNG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, FIRST CONCEIVED HIS REVO-
LUTINARY PLANS. BY ALL LIBYAN STANDARDS THE THREE-DAY
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CONGRESS WAS ORDERLY, WELL-STRUCTURED AND CLEARLY ORCHESTRA-
TED. THE FROSTING ON THE CAKE, OF COURSE, WAS THE PRESENCE
OF SENIOR EVOLUTIONARY LEADER FIDEL CASTRO WHO GAVE
HIS BLESSING TO THE LIBYAN REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIMENT.

2. THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WAS ALSO PRESENT THROUGHOUT
THE PROCEEDINGS AS HONORED GUESTS (OR RESENTFUL CAPTIVES)

AND WITNESSES TO THE "HISTORIC EVENT." THE CORPS WAS TRANSPORTED BY SPECIAL FLIGHT FROM TRIPOLI AT 0600 FEB 28 AND RETURNED TO TRIPOLI AT 0600 MAR 3 FOLLOWING THE FINAL ALL-NIGHT SESSION (THE TWO EARLIER SESSIONS HAVING LASTED ONLY HALF THE NIGHT).

3. WHILE THERE WAS LITTLE REAL DEBATE DURING THE COURSE OF THE PROCEEDINGS, MOST DELEGATIONS WERE CALLED UPON TO EXPRESS THE VIEWS OF THE GROUPS THEY REPRESENTED. IT WAS CLEAR THAT THERE WERE TWO MAJOR CONCERNS AMONG THE DELEGATIONS. THE FIRST WAS GREAT NERVOUSNESS OVER CHANGING THE NAME OF THE STATE. DELEGATION AFTER DELEGATION INDICATED THAT IF "SOCIALIST" WERE TO APPEAR IN THE NEW NAME IT SHOULD BE PRECEDED BY THE WORD "ISLAMIC." FEARS WERE EXPRESSED THAT WITHOUT DEFINING IT AS ISLAMIC SOCIALISM IT MIGHT DEVELOP INTO COMMUNISM AND THAT PRIVATE PROPERTY AS DEFINED IN THE HOLY KORAN MIGHT BE ABOLISHED. THE DELEGATIONS ALSO SHOWED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN OVER THE DEPARTURE OF JALLUD AND HUYAYDI FROM THE GOVERNMENT. THEY INSISTED THAT THEY SHOULD REMAIN EXPRESSING THE FEAR THAT THE NEW NAMES COULD NOT POSSIBLY PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP THAT WAS NECESSARY.

4. QADHAFI PRESIDED OVER THESE PROCEEDINGS, WHICH HE AND OTHERS CLAIMED WERE THE FOCUS OF WORLD ATTENTION AND HAD APPLICABILITY FAR BEYOND THE BORDERS OF LIBYA, WITH PATIENCE, OCCASIONAL HUMOR AND GREAT FIRMNESS. WHILE HE GAVE ALMOST ALL MEMBERS WHO CHOSE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK, HE FREQUENTLY REJECTED THEIR ANSWERS AS IRRELEVANT AND WHEN OBJECTIONS BEGAN TO BECOME GENERAL, HE WOULD ADJOURN THE MEETING. ON ITS RESUMPTION THE PROPOSALS WOULD BE PROCLAIMED AS HAVING BEEN PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. WHILE QADHAFI CLEARLY KNEW WHAT HE WANTED (THE CABINET SELECTION WAS CLEARLY IMPOSED) AND WAS DETERMINED TO OBTAIN IT, HE MADE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO STIMULATE THE THINKINGS OF THE DELEGATIONS. HE CONSISTENTLY ASKED THEM TO PUT FORWARD REASONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THEIR STATEMENTS POINTING OUT THAT THE PEOPLE OF LIBYA COULD NEVER REALLY RULE THEMSELVES UNLESS THEY TOOK THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES SERIOUSLY AND APPROACHED MATTERS LOGICALLY.

5. THE EFFECT OF LIBYA'S ADOPTION OF A PEOPLE'S AUTHORITY IS THAT, BY ITS CREATION AND SUBSEQUENT ELECTION OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, IT EFFECTIVELY ENABLED COL. QADHAFI TO ABOLISH THE RCC AND REMOVE TWO

OF ITS MOST INFLUENTIAL OFFICERS FROM SIGNIFICANT ROLES
IN THE GOVERNMENT. AS SPECULATED FOR SOME TIME
(TRIPOLI 1026), COL. QADHAFI PLANNED THE REMOVAL OF
MAJOR JALLUD FROM THE PRIME MINISTRY. WHILE JALLUD
REMAINS AS A MEMBER OF THE PEOPLE'S CONGRESS GENERAL
SECRETARIAT, HIS INFLUENCE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLY DIMINISHED
SINCE HE NOW HOLDS NO GOVERNMENT MINISTERIAL PORFOLIO. IT
ALSO REMOVED RCC MEMBER MAJOR AL-KHWAILDI AL-HUMAYDI FROM HIS
POSITION AS MINISTER OF INTERIOR. HYMAYDI'S DIFFERENCES WITH
QADHAFI HAVE BEEN PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND THERE HAS BEEN
MUCH SPECULATION IN THE PAST CONCERNING HIS REMOVAL
(TRIPOLI 1150). HUMAYDI IS REPLACED BY DEPUTY UNDER
SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR YUNIS BELGASSEM
(SEP BIO FOLLOWS), WHO IS KNOWN FOR HIS PERSONAL
LOYALTY TO, AND SUPPORT OF COL. QADHAFI.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TRIPOLI 0294

6. THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE NEW STRUCTURE WILL NOT
BE KNOWN FOR SOME TIME. IN ESSENCE, HOWEVER, THIS
"AUTHORITY" HAS CREATED APOPULAR AND LEGITIMATE
MECHANISM FOR A PEACEFUL TRANSITION OF POWER. THOUGH
QADHAFI UNDOUBTEDLY REMAINS THE DOMINANT POLITICAL

ELEMENT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PEOPLE'S CONGRESS, THE NEW SYSTEM THEORETICALLY GIVES LIBYANS THE ABILITY TO REMOVE, BY CONSTITUTIONAL MEANS, THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP. THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE RCC CONTAINED NO MECHANISM FOR TRANSITION, LEAVING COUP D'ETAT AS THE ONLY VEHICLE OF CHANGE.

7. THE REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP HAS IN EFFECT WITH-
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DRAWN FROM THE ACTIVE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT BUT WILL CLEARLY BE THE FOCUS OF GUIDANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE FUTURE.
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